

## It Messes with Everything (Acts 17:1-15)

It's one thing to be told to believe. No dialogue, no questions, no explanation. It's another to have something explained, ask questions and examine it for yourself. The story of Jesus has been explained for thousands of years with reason, proof and thoughtful dialogue. Now it's our turn. Are we ready to listen, able to explain and willing to examine the Scriptures? In Acts 17 some are persuaded the message about Jesus is what they were hoping for while others think it's messing with everything. So which is it? Could both be true?

### 1. Are you ready to explain Jesus from the Scriptures? (Acts 17:1-3)

Thessalonica (capitol city of the Roman province of Macedonia) – a strategic city.

“reasoned” = “say it thoroughly”; enter discussion; could involve argument, exhortation. Involved hearing objections and answering questions; interpreting - “opening” the Scriptures up. Luke 24:27, 32

It was *necessary* for the Messiah to suffer, die and be raised. = it had to happen this way.

“Jesus is THE Christ” = THE Messiah (Christ is the grk); THE Anointed One; THE King.

Are we willing to do the hard but rewarding work of listening to questions, answering objections and pointing to the Scriptures?

### 2. It messes with everything! (Acts 17:4-9)

VV6b-7 The first accusation? *“These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also...”* = *“Causing trouble everywhere! Messing with everything!”*

Our world is upside down and broken. The message about Jesus turns a broken world right-side up.

Second accusation? *“acting against decrees of Caesar, saying there’s another king, Jesus!”*

Of course Jesus is going to disrupt and completely upend our broken lives!

He’s has come to overthrow our self-run, self-governed lives.

Out of joy for this young church Paul writes the letter of 1 Thessalonians. 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

### 3. Are you willing examine Jesus in the Scriptures? (come alongside others) (Acts 17:10-15)

Let’s pray for an open-minded, eager reception of the gospel and the thoughtful examination of Scripture. We’ve been given an example to follow. A strategy to adopt.

God has done something about humanity’s brokenness and shame; about the hurt and pain; death and separation. It’s what the Scriptures have been shouting for thousands of years.

**QUESTIONS** (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. Read Acts 17:1-15. While in Thessalonica, Paul follows his normal practice in going to the synagogue. It says he “reasoned with them from the scriptures.” What did this involve? What was his main topic and why? Why was it “necessary” for Jesus to suffer and rise from the dead?
2. Maybe you’ve been told to believe something and that was that. No dialogue, no questions, no explanation. What is radically different about Paul’s approach?
3. Things get rowdy. Jason is dragged before the authorities. In what sense had Paul and Silas turned the world upside down? (VV5-9)
4. The message about Jesus really does mess with everything. It turns a broken world right-side up, reveals false hopes and dreams, exposes lies and challenges us to lay aside what won’t satisfy. Why is this a good thing? Can you share how Jesus has done this in your own life?
5. The mob claimed Paul and friends were saying *“there is another King, Jesus!”* Why was that message so disturbing to the city officials? Why is it a threat to people still?
6. How do the people in Berea differ from the people in Thessalonica?
7. The Thessalonians lived in a pluralistic society, surrounded by idols, misunderstood by local authorities and opposed by those who were jealous. Now read 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10. How did the gospel come to them? What was the result? Pray the same thing for LCSP.

Pray for the humility and courage to listen, answer questions and explain who Jesus is and why he came *from the Scriptures*. Ask the Lord to bring someone into your life soon.